

NOTE VI.

ON THE OCCURRENCE OF PLATALEA REGIA, GOULD
ON CELEBES, BOEROE AND TIMOR

BY

Dr. E. D. VAN OORT.

While making the osteological catalogue of the birds of our Museum, I met with an imperfect skull of a spoonbill, which has been sent over from Celebes by von Rosenberg in the year 1864. The skull belongs to the black-billed australian spoonbill, *Platalea regia* Gould. This object is the bill of a bird mentioned by von Rosenberg in his general work on the Malay Archipelago ¹⁾ and which was shot several years ago ²⁾ in the rice-fields of the village Lango-wan, N. E. Celebes. Von Rosenberg mentions this bill under the obscure name of *Platalea luzoniensis*, saying that several examples of this species, killed on the Soela Islands, are in the collection of the Leyden Museum, while in his manuscript-list of the birds, collected by him on Celebes and sent in 1864 to our Museum, he says in addition to the above-named skull, that two specimens of *Pl. luzoniensis* were got by Hoedt on the Soela Islands. As we know, Meyer and Wiglesworth were already informed by Büttikofer ³⁾, that in the Leyden Museum there is no *Platalea* whatever from the Soela Islands. The two authors therefore could only speak of a *Platalea* sp. observed on Celebes.

1) H. von Rosenberg. Der Malayische Archipel, 1878, p. 278.

2) Von Rosenberg was collecting on Celebes in the years 1863—64.

3) Meyer and Wiglesworth. Birds of Celebes, II, 1898, p. 809.

Fortunately now it is sure, that *Platalea regia* has occurred on Celebes.

From other localities in the Austro-Malay Archipelago our Museum possesses *Platalea regia* from Boeroe: two females are collected by our traveller D. S. Hoedt, November 4th 1864, on that island. These are the two specimens recorded by Ogilvie-Grant¹⁾ in his memoir on the Genus *Platalea* under the name of *Platalea intermedia*, as having been killed on Borneo. This however is a mistake; in stead of »Borneo” one must read »Boeroe” (Buru). Hoedt was never collecting on Borneo and in November 1864 he was collecting on Boeroe. Moreover I find mentioned in his manuscript-list of the birdskins sent by him to our Museum in 1865, under Nos 921 and 922, two spoonbills, both females, killed on Boeroe, 4 November 1864, with the following remarks: »Eyes darkblue with a coffee-coloured ring, bill darkgrey, legs black. These birds have been shot on the shore in front of the Fort Kajeli. The eldest inhabitants of Boeroe declared they had never seen this bird before.” This statement shows, that the bird is very rare on the island.

There is also an example of this species from Timor in the collection, viz. an adult one without indication of sex or date, and presented in 1881 by Mr. van Lansberge.

As to the two birds, which, according to von Rosenberg, Hoedt should have collected on the Soela Islands, no indication is to be found; it is however impossible, that von Rosenberg has confounded the birds killed on Boeroe with those from the Soela Islands, the manuscript-list of von Rosenberg being dated: Gorontalo, August 15th 1864, thus before the birds were killed on Boeroe. So it is probable, that this bird has also occurred on the Soela Islands.

This is all, that can be told of the occurrence of *Platalea regia* in the Austro-Malay Archipelago at the hand of the Museum's material.

1) Ibis, 1889, p. 32. See also Sharpe, Cat. B. Br. M. XXVI, 1898, p. 48.

Everett ¹⁾ has recorded a specimen under the name of *Pl. intermedia*, as having been obtained on Borneo; I have not seen Everett's paper, but I suppose, he makes mention of this species in the list of Bornean birds on authority of Ogilvie-Grant.

Hartert mentions three specimens collected by Kühn on the Key Islands ²⁾ and one specimen from Wetter, collected by the same ³⁾.

From S. E. New Guinea the bird is reported by Ogilvie-Grant ⁴⁾ as *Pl. intermedia*, a specimen being obtained at Port Moresby. No cases of occurrence in Western New Guinea are known to me.

These single captures prove, that our bird is a very rare straggler in the Eastern Austro-Malay Archipelago and that its western limits are N. E. Celebes and Timor.

1) Journ. Straits Branch Roy. As. Soc., 1889.

2) Nov. Zool. VIII, 1901, p. 99.

3) Nov. Zool. XI, 1904, p. 188.

4) Ibis, 1889, p. 52.

Leyden Museum, April 1907.